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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper was to examine the problems of and demands on female administrators as they make the transition from the elementary to the secondary school principalship where more policy-setting is involved. Two case studies are presented of women principals making the transition within large city school systems. The subjects were observed for twelve full school days throughout the academic year as they conducted their daily business. After a detailed discussion of some of the obstacles they overcame, the paper concludes that a study of additional female principals over the whole school year may provide a context for interpreting the findings of normative research on larger samples of female managers. (Author/LD)

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The Female High School Principal: Key Factors in Successful Career Advancement

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In 1971, one in five principals of elementary schools were female, but only 6.5 percent of secondary school principals were female. The same low percentage of female high school principals persisted in 1977.[1] Female administrators who are not elementary principals are likely to be concentrated in middle management doing general administration, personnel services or curriculum, rather than in top level and policy setting jobs.[2] A 1972 study of school superintendents in every state reported only .4 percent were females.[3]

Female school administrators are not often promoted to high level, policy making positions in school systems. The first indication that an administrator is a candiuate for the top, policy setting jobs is likely to be promotion to the principalship of a high school. Females

[1] National Education Association, Research Bulletin, XLIX (October 1971), p. 68, and David R. Byrne, Susan A. Hines, and Lloyd E. McCleary, The Senior High School Principalship Vol. I The National Survey (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1978), p. 1.

[2] National Education Association, (1971), p. 68.

[3] Jacqueline Clement, Sex Bias in School Leadership (Evanston, Ill.: Integrated Education Associates, 1975).

who succeed in becoming administrators are concentrated in the positions below high school principal. Since few females become high school principals, their careers do not advance through this important gateway to the upper ranks of school administration.

There are many circumstances which reduce the chances for females to become high school principals. Woman are likely to teach in the elementary school; men are likely to teach in the high school. Men become administrators at a younger age than females because they spend fewer years in the teaching ranks. Men are likely to decide to enter administration early in their career. Women generally spend many years teaching before deciding to enter administration. In their sample of 189 elementary school principals, Gross and Trask reported that 79 percent of the women were over 50 years of age, 51 percent had taught for 16 years or more, and only 30 percent had seriously considered a career in administration by the time they were 30 years of age. By contrast, 47 percent of the men in the study were over 50 years of age, only 14 percent had taught school for 16 years or more, and 74 percent had seriously considered a career in administration by the time they were 30 years of age. Men and women in the study had similar achievements in graduate school, but the men were far more likely to have selected administration as their focus of study. Only 36 percent of the women had completed over 20 semester hours in the administration, in

contrast to 57 percent of the men.[4]

Some evidence documents attitudes by top ranking school administrators which block the promotion of women above entry level administrative positions. In interviews with male and female administrators, Patricia Schmuck reported examples of these attitudes by male administrators. One said:

> It is easier to work without women. Principals and superintendents are a management team...We need each other for survival...I wonder if we could hang together so well if some of us were women. Could she protect my job as well as her own? I don't have that concern with a guy; he talks the same language.[5]

Guidelines which prohibit sex discrimination in school administration are likely to lead to the appointment of more females as high school principals. To succeed in these positions, women need information about the administrative skills that are required at this level. To learn more about the problems and demands of a successful transition, two case studies were made of one black and one white female as they assumed the principalship of a high school. The subjects were observed for twelve full school days each as they conducted their daily business. When their jobs took them away from the school, such as to meetings with their peers and supervisors, they were observed there as well.

[4] Neal Gross and Anne Trask, The Sex Factor and the Management of Schools (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976).

[5] Patricia A. Schmuck, "Deterrents to Women's Careers in School Management," Sex Roles, I, (1975), pp. 339-354.

Notes were taken during the observations which included direct quotations whenever possible. The observations were made throughout the academic year to gain a longitudinal picture of their adjustment. The principals were appointed to their new schools as part of a plan to meet federal guidelines prohibiting job discrimination on the basis of race or sex. They are principals in one of the nation's largest city school systems.

Because each principal attended after school and evening meetings, in excess of ninety hours of observation was accumulated on each subject. These data were examined to discover examples of the problems and demands involved in the transition from elementary to secondary school principal. To protect their anonymity, exact circumstances pertaining to the examples reported here have been altered.

The Case Studies

Bonnie Grath said that if she would have had her choice in the past, she would have applied to be a high school principal a long time ago. But under the old system where the community could choose principals, they selected few females as high school principals. It was for this reason that she sought an assignment at an elementary school which offered special programs for students of high school age whose test scores were far below their grade level. The school had a bad reputation when she

became principal, but it improved during her administration. She said that it took a long time, bad reputations "die hard." She described the chance to become a high school principal as a "wonderful opportunity," after over ten years as an elementary school principal. The challenge of her new job and the progress that she feels she is making in her career far outweigh the disadvantage of a long commute from her home to the high school.

Louise Roberts did not want to leave her old school which she described as "my school" because "I personalized it." She built one of the city's best elementary school programs by introducing innovative, individualized learning systems. She said that the most rewarding moment in her life was seeing three year olds start to sound out words. Then, at the end of the summer she was told "that's gone." She was told to report to the high school. She wondered aloud, "How much impact can I make here?" Yet she also expressed a determination to succeed. She said "I'm not the type who could come here and not get involved."

Both principals have styles that differ from their predecessors. Grath was preceeded by a man whose manner has been described by many faculty as authoritarian. Hers is a democratic style of leadership. Roberts inherited a school where the faculty had much autonomy and the community set the tone for strict student discipline. She has an active, creative style focused on building programs and rewarding performance. When she was criticized for changing the way things had always been done under the previous principal she said, "I am not Dr. Jacobs. We don't look

anything alike. Don't tell me what Dr. Jacobs did. I'm not him. I'm tired of hearing what he did."

Both principals pointed out differences between their experience as high school principal and that at the elementary level. Grath emphasized the complex structure of a high school. At the elementary school there were twenty-five teachers and one clerk on her staff. The high school has an educational staff which is five times as large. There is a team of administrators who specialize in programming, counseling, student activities, financies, discipline and other administrative areas. The division of labor creates a team of specialists. The principal, in contrast, is the generalist. Whereas the elementary school was small, the high school has nearly two thousand students and miles of hallway in its huge physical plant. In December of her first year Grath complained that she still gets confused and sometimes turns the wrong direction when looking for a room number.

When Grath was at the elementary school, she handled issues informally and would "catch the problems on the run." The high school uses formal meetings with the principal where issues are brought to her attention. She sometimes feels intimidated by the more bureaucratic structure, since she is used to dealing informally with a small, close staff. Although she described the faculty as "cordial so far" she felt the distance of the more formal relationship during the early months.

Grath reported difficulty in finding out who everyone is and what they do. The specialized course and activities structure is difficult to absorb at once. She has spent a good deal of time studying school records to identify recurrent events, problems and individuals responsible for planning seasonal activities. She has developed a system of writing things down in order to stay organized. She keeps a small note pad which she uses to write notes asking for information and sending messages. She also makes notes to herself on the pad. She keeps a schedule book. She also places materials which require her attention in a stack on her desk. She explained that she cannot rely on her memory to remind her of each obligation or promise. She said that she often thinks of a previous principal of the high school, also a female. Her reputation was of an unruffled, efficient administrator who always presented a perfect appearance. Grath says that after a long day she often looks into the mirror in the closet of her office and tells herself, "Now Ella Mason wouldn't look like that." Grath, whose children are young adults, said she is glad that she doesn't have any little children at home when she gets there. She doesn't have the energy she would need to relate to them. In fact, she said that she needs to relax in silence for a few hours in order to unwind from a day of work.

Roberts felt that she had to "change her style" in order to "adapt" to the high school. As an elementary principal, she had more personal relationships with her faculty.

She explained that elementary teachers "come to you with people problems." She counseled her staff on these personal matters. She described the elementary school staff as close emotionally and close physically. Both the staff and the physical plant were small. The high school teachers are "more aloof" and she knows "less about them and their personal lives." She said that in the high school, if she wants to see someone she calls them into her office. The high school teachers can "keep out of my scrutiny" in a way that would have been impossible at the elementary school. She said that if she were to rate her "people" orientation on a scale from 1 to 10, she would say that as an elementary principal she was a 9, whereas at the high school she vacillates between 1 and 9. If she were to compare her "administrative" orientation on the same scale, she would rank herself as 5 when she was at the elementary school and an 8 at the high school.

Roberts described changes in her professional image since leaving the elementary school. She had been active in professional associations that concentrated on reading and young children (International Reading Association and the Society for the Education of Young Children). She was also a member of the National Association of Elementary School Principals. She has been researching professional associations for the secondary schools and is in the process of shifting her memberships to these groups. She has also purchased several recent books on the secondary school curriculum for her personal professional library.

Roberts commented on the increase in school related events she is expected to attend after school hours as a high school principal. Most of these are related to school activity programs, particularly athletics. She said that she often is at school until 10:00 p.m. "just making appearances at things." She thinks that students performing in these activities "like their principal to be there to see them." At the end of the year each club has a luncheon or dinner and invites the principal. Roberts said that her predecessor "finally got them to combine some of these activities." Roberts feels that these obligations bite into her personal time. Her youngest child is in high school. She expresses gratitude for the support she receives from her husband.

Roberts feels that the high school principal has more to do when meeting the regular expectations of the Board of Education. She has built a reputation of competency by developing skill in locating outside funding and additional resources for her school, by her adherence to the union contract, and by keeping up to date on the paperwork pertaining to her staff. The size and diversity of the high school will mean more numerous tasks when meeting these responsibilities.

Both principals inherited a specialized administrative staff. Grath accepted the authority that each assistant principal carried with their responsibilities. She relied on the team to show her the jobs that were routinely executed at various times during the year. Grath said that she had trouble adjusting to the "team concept." As an elementary

principal she ran the school single-handedly. Her general approach in the high school was to let her assistants carry on as they had in the past, while she studied their jobs and school policies. She described the team as functioning smoothly with "surprisingly little pettiness." She felt this to be fortunate. Her hands-off attitude was articulated early in the year when she said, "no one really steps on anyone's toes except me. I am the new person and I do, but it never really seems to be a problem so far."

Grath encouraged her staff to initiate new projects. Two assistant principals planned a tea for honors students and their parents. The students and their parents warmly received this tribute to their scholarship. Grath commented afterwards, "Now we have a tradition." She told the assistants, "you know, you really make me look good."

Roberts took a different approach. She said that a new principal has to decide whether the principal is going to adjust to the staff or the staff is going to adjust to the principal. She felt that the staff should adjust to the principal. She commented, "I cannot adjust to 102 people, so they will just have to adjust to me." Her approach was to direct the activities of her administrative team to make changes in school policy, staff assignments, program planning, fund raising and the preparation of reports for the central administration.

She constantly gathered information about the central and district administration and shared this with her staff to

establish her credibility in their eyes. She was remarkably informed about central policy, personnel, history and current priorities. She got most of her information by carefully studying written documents, bulletins and memos. She said she tries to get a "picture of the schematic" relating to the overall plans and direction of the central administration for the school system. She constantly asks, "How can I (my school) fit into it?" The written information is supplemented with verbal information obtained through presentations at meetings and conversation with other principals. She also telephones personnel in the central administration requesting clarifications on questions she generates as she reads reports, bulletins and memos.

She also gathers information by inference based on the information she is asked to supply the central administration. She explained, "every time I fill out a report for the Board of Education, I have one question on my mind, what will this report be used for?" She described herself as a person who "needs closure." She is "uncomfortable" with pieces of policy and program. She needs to know how the pieces fit together. She tries to piece them into a picture of the entire system. She tries to picture her school within this context. She then puts her energies into tasks that are compatible with the system, and makes sure her duties are correctly carried out.

Because of her system-wide perspective, she is able to apply her experience as an elementary principal to the

system, and indirectly to her job in a high school in the same system. When informed by the central administration that she needed to dismiss several teacher aides, she offered the aides information on positions in elementary schools that they were entitled to because of their seniority in the school system. During her first semester at the high school, a proficiency skills examination was initiated as a graduation requirement. She related this development to her experience with standardized achievement tests and mastery skills testing when they were introduced to the elementary curriculum. She predicted greater use of skills testing in the high school. She predicted that criterion reference tests would be constructed for every curriculum area and that it will be cross-referenced to the high school curriculum guides. She said, "I saw the handwriting on the wall, because I came from the elementary school." She felt that her experience with these kinds of programs would help her administer them in the high school. In another situation she examined the reading laboratory at the high school and criticized it for lack of a learning system. She saw that students were being assigned remedial materials, but they were not part of an individualized learning plan. She used her expertise in reading to select and work with a new teacher to structure a learning system for the reading lab.

Grath described the diversity in secondary school curriculum and the autonomy of specialized teachers as the predominant feature of the high school structure. The

departments receive small stipends to purchase textbooks and learning materials. This complicated budget breakdown reduces the flexibility that the principal has in the allocation and distribution of money. By comparison, the elementary school principal can systematize the purchasing of learning materials because the curriculum is standardized. The budget structure supports the autonomy of high school faculty in matters of curriculum.

During her initial weeks as principal, Roberts took steps to gain influence over the teaching in the school. She announced that department chairs would no longer be elected by their departments, but would be selected by her. Teachers would hand in lesson plans for her inspection on a regular basis. Teachers were to limit their disciplinary referrals to rule violations and students were no longer to be failed in courses because of attendance or tardiness. These policies were distributed to the faculty in a revised edition of the teacher's handbook. Roberts described the handbook as "where I annunciate how I am going to grade the teachers." She added that after receiving the handbook they "can't say they didn't know."

The handbooks were distributed at a faculty meeting where teachers signed forms stating they had received the book. The union representative stated that "teachers (here) have not ever had their lesson plans inspected." He told her, "we're not ready for you." Most faculty applauded him. Roberts responded that in many other city high schools teachers are

required to produce lesson plans. She asked teachers who have taught at other schools what their experience has been. Some shouted out that they were required to do lesson plans, others shouted that this was not required at their previous schools. Roberts told the teachers, "I am sorry you never had lesson plans before, but it is part of your professional responsibility to have them now." After the meeting, as Roberts walked in the hall, she saw faculty members talking in groups. She commented, "now we have made them a cohesive faculty, now they have someone to hate."

During the weeks that followed, most faculty seemed wiling to do lesson plans. Many stopped by Roberts' office to ask her to comment on their plans before they were submitted. She was not overly critical, but did insist that the plans include behavioral objectives. She decided to go slow in her replacement of department chairs. She explained that she "tried to remove a department chair but she boohooed, so I let her stay, besides I can wait."

She visited a nearby school and found a group of her faculty in a meeting complaining about her. When she confronted them, they went to great lengths to disguise the fact of their complaining. Later they claimed that she "is so vindictive that she will retaliate if she hears that we were here complaining about lesson plans." Her resilience in the face of criticism is illustrated by an instance where a faculty member came to her office and complained that she had killed staff morale, been extremely negative in her evaluation of teachers, and treated the teachers like children.

Ms. Pagni, the teacher who complained, maintained that the teachers at the high school were of superior quality and not accustomed to this kind of treatment.

The interview concluded at 2:30 P.M. Roberts said that she felt devastated after the session. At that point she began to doubt her approach to the principalship. She began to doubt whether she could be a good principal. She continued to doubt for precisely eight minutes. But then she felt herself revive and regain confidence in her administrative abilities. She decided that Ms. Pagni was taking a superior attitude in her harangue and celebrating her superiority not only as a teacher, but as a moral person. Roberts felt that Pagni was enraged because Roberts was not complimenting her on her superiority. Reviewing the incident, Roberts said that at 2:30 she was "resolved to be a kind, loving, generous, democratic, inspirational public relations type principal." She was saying things to herself like, "what parts of my personality do I change?" But by 2:38 she felt that this kind of thinking was not getting her anywhere. She felt that many teachers in the school overestimated the quality of their teaching because they have consistently received high ratings in their yearly evaluation. She checked the school records and discovered that 106 out of 112 teachers had been given the highest rating on a five point scale. She did not plan to give so many high ratings. She decided, at last, to stick by her policies and get from the people in the community and the faculty "respect for the position that I hold."

Because she felt widely criticized, she wanted to be sure to comply with the union contract in her relations with the teachers. She was also careful to submit her required reports to the central administration promptly and correctly. She did not want to appear negligent in her duties. She planned to carry out her instructions to the letter, particularly those instructions pertaining to a written product.

Although Roberts' initial approach was to establish performance criteria, a second characteristic mode of interaction developed concurrently. This was her use of rewards for staff. As an elementary school principal she had employed a behavioral modification program for students. The students began receiving clothes, candy and other items of immediate gratification until they built up to more prolonged means of gratification. As principal, it was her role to gratify the teachers. She did this by offering honors to her staff such as teacher of the month. In the high school she was observed praising the staff for a job well done on numerous occasions. She spent time each day dictating thank you notes to teachers and students congratulating them for outstanding performance or thanking them for personal support. She stopped them in the hall and asked about their activities or let them know how much she appreciated their efforts. When she heard about an award to a student or team she called the faculty sponsor into her office and promised rewards. An awards luncheon was planned for a group of students and their teachers

after a city-wide festival where several students' displays were awarded prizes. She bought new balls and practice equipment for the tennis team when it qualified for the state playoffs. She offered to pay the travel expenses for the track team to attend a state meet after a local victory. These rewards were financed through special sales of candy and ticket sales for dances and other entertainments. Slowly Roberts built a strong support network among the top performers in the faculty. She believed that "everybody loves that pat on the back."

Grath's relationship with her faculty developed more slowly. Although she was pleased with the general performance of her administrative team, she became aware that some faculty complained about some policies and procedures. She planned a system designed to collect information on the nature and extent of these complaints. She instructed all faculty departments to meet and draw up a list of problems and complaints. She asked them to turn the list in to her personally. She promised to respond at a faculty meeting.

Grath studied the lists carefully and began to search out additional information on each complaint before she planned her response. She examined the records of past faculty and department meetings to identify the longstanding issues and to learn the solutions that had been tried previously. She studied the activities budgets and financial records to learn how funds were raised and spent. She studied Board of

Education policy and the union contract to determine and clarify constraints effecting these issues. She separated the issues she could do something about from those she could not. She conducted interviews with staff to better understand their concerns and to discover why some issues were not a problem for some staff.

As she pieced together information pertaining to each issue, she reviewed her impressions informally with members of her administrative team. In particular she sought their advice on her plans for responding to each problem. She said, "I dream about this stuff in the middle of the night." At one point she almost cancelled an observation day. She explained, "I almost called you last night to tell you not to come today because I was feeling sick to my stomach and thought maybe I was getting the flu." Then she speculated that perhaps she was doing what children do occasionally, getting sick in order not to have to go to school. She further speculated that her work on these problems might be the cause of her nauseous stomach. She described her problems as being like "quick sand." She said that she sometimes feels like she is trying to collect mercury from the bathroom floor after dropping and breaking a thermometer.

Most of the faculty arrived early for the meeting. Grath sent for a microphone so that she could be heard easily. She told them that her request for their list of problems was not intended by her to be only an "exercise in penmanship."

On the other hand, she told them it was not her intent to "promise great solutions" to every problem that was raised. The purpose, she explained, was to address a problem of morale because she felt that not enough information was being communicated. She also realized that information is not sufficient in itself to solve some of the very real problems they are facing. She said that she sees the faculty meeting as "a chance for one person to say something to all of you at one time" about these problems. She explained that she preferred to address everyone at once instead of responding to an individual's questions while others watch and worry about what is going on. Grath then gave her response problem by problem.

One problem that upset most faculty was a plan to replace individual department offices with a preparation center for the entire faculty. Grath said that when she was raising her family she had a saying which was, "Never move a happy baby." She has the same attitude toward the team offices. She told them that she doesn't need these kinds of problems and neither do they. But she asked them to give the preparation center a try on the basis that if they liked it they might keep it in addition to the team offices. To make her position clear she stated, "I am not against team offices."

Another issue involved the school's tardy policy. Many teachers wanted to lock late students out of the classroom. Grath explained that she had reviewed the minutes of the meetings of department chairs and learned that the problem

of tardiness has "always been with us." She announced that she will organize a committee to study this problem and school security. She realized that many teachers want to punish late students with a detention but wondered, "who is going to supervise these activities?" She told them that she had been "knocking my head against the wall on this issue for a long time. If there is anybody on the staff who wants to join the committee and knock their head against the wall on the same issue, I am glad to have you around." She acknowledged that "I don't know the answer. If you lock the door, the students stay in the hall where there is nobody to supervise them." Some other teachers who are small in stature, she pointed out, and who have little teaching experience are neither facing tardiness or absences in their classes. She asked the staff directly, "How many of you have walked in late? Maybe we need to take a look at ourselves."

These are samples of her response to the faculty complaints. She left ten minutes for questions at the end of the meeting. When it concluded she was warmly applauded by the staff. Afterwards, one of the assistant principals came to her office. He had spoken to many faculty, including the "hard liners" and they complimented her presentation. He described their feeling that her response was "straight talk." He liked her explanation that "this is what I can do and this is what I can't do." The faculty he talked to also felt that her solutions were realistic and she "didn't promise anything she couldn't deliver." She gave "facts not rhetoric." He said that most of them came expecting to hear

a speech that was mostly ideas and philosophy and instead got a lot of specific facts relevant to their complaints. They liked her admission that she did not know what to do about tardiness, and that she indicated sometimes the fault may be with the teacher rather than the policy. The faculty meeting established Grath's credibility with the faculty. It marked a turning point in her administration where she took hold as an open-minded, thoughtful administrator who could take a stand when it was called for and who recognized the limits of her power.

Other developments in the Grath and Roberts administrations that were observed in this study will be mentioned briefly. Both principals continued to advise people from their previous elementary schools. Grath helped her former clerk learn to keep her old school's financial records, a job she had done herself as principal. She described her former clerk as a "very good friend." Roberts was frequently called upon by parents from her former school. She had worked with many parents' groups at the elementary school. They continued to call her for advice and information about other staff and Board of Education policy.

Both Grath and Roberts spent little time with students. They admitted any student who came to their office, but few did so. When students approached them they would usually get help with any reasonable problem. As both principals walked in the halls they challenged students for their passes and gave friendly greetings to students they knew. Neither principal

was involved with routine discipline problems. These were left to counselors and assistant principals. When a problem showed potential to blow up into a school or community incident, however, the principal met with the parties involved to work out a resolution. Both principals attended student contests and performances. They attended sports competitions and dances. One principal commented that if she did not come to these events the students would think she did not care about them. By going she keeps saying "I care, I care." The friendly greetings extended to students in halls usually had their roots in these visits to extracurricular activities.

Both principals commented on the amount of time they devoted to sports activities. The sports programs were inadequately funded and much time was devoted to raising money to pay for uniforms, playing equipment, training equipment and transportation to events. Although coaches were paid a small stipend, it was not always possible to find a coach for every team. One teacher tried to swap physical education teachers who refused to coach sports for teachers from other schools who wanted to coach. Both hired some coaches who taught at other schools. Another problem was a shortage of students for the teams. In some sports it was touch and go whether enough students would come to a game to form a team. The extensive paperwork pertaining to interscholastic competition was also discussed. Principals signed forms daily. One principal commented that the time devoted to athletics is "way out of proportion to the number of kids involved in the programs."

The extent of principal involvement required led one principal to joke that what she really needed to be a high school principal was "a fast, crash P.E. course."

Although both principals worked well with their entire administrative staff, they each selected one assistant principal with whom they worked closely. Both selected males with whom they shared their perceptions about people and situations. The principals used them as sounding boards for their decisions and policies. Both assistants served as liaison for the principals to the boys' physical education department. Both assistants spent a great deal of time with students. In addition to their assistant, both built a close relationship with one male principal from a nearby elementary school. One principal described this relationship. She said that she could go to him for help and not have to worry about him telling other people that she does not know what she is doing because she has to ask questions. In general, the principals in this study discussed situations inside the school with their assistant principal and discussed relationships within the system with the other principal.

In The Competent Woman Barnett and Baruch discuss barriers to promotion facing females. Problems for women that they identify are a lack of role models, difficulty in delegating authority, role conflict, and finding support in situations where others, particularly other women, are non-supportive.[6] With regard to role models, Roberts mentioned

[6] Rosalind C. Barnett and Grace K. Baruch, The Competent Woman (New York: Irvington Publishers, Inc., 1979), pp. 44-46.

male high school principals she had worked with. For Grath the image of a "perfect" female role model was deflating rather than inspiring. Exposure to effective administrative strategy would appear to be more instructive than images of outstanding women to whom the rugged realities of daily encounters seem shabby by comparison.

Barnett and Baruch reason that women may be more likely than men to delegate authority because it "is not part of the feminine role. The role of housewife and mother is actually the direct opposite, it consists in large part of doing precisely those things that others are unable or unwilling to do for themselves."[7] The high school principal's relationship to the administrative team is based on what principals do and do not delegate. Grath inherited an administrative team with a functioning division of labor which was established by her predecessor. She allowed it to continue to operate while she studied it. She explained that one of the hardest adjustments she faced as a high school principal was "being able to judge when it is appropriate to get involved in what the assistant principals are doing and when not to become involved." As she studied their work she determined that she could not get involved with everything. So she chose to become involved in decisions which displeased many faculty members. She chose to focus on the malfunctions of the school's administrative system.

[7]Barnett and Baruch, pp. 44-45.

Roberts took a different approach. She was determined to establish new programs and policy within the school. She took charge of these and the preparation of special responses to requests by the central administration. She left the assistant principals to continue to administer routine matters. She expected them to each devote some additional time to her projects.

The problem of role conflict was minimized for both principals in this study because they no longer had small children. Roberts mentions her supportive husband. Both found their major support in male colleagues. They selected male partners to give them advice. This may be explained, in part, by the division of labor. The male assistant principals assisted in discipline cases and communicating with the boys' physical education department. It should be pointed out that neither principal turned to these male assistants exclusively. Both were observed to consult with other females when it was appropriate.

Research on women in management has tried to identify the kind of managers women make. Some have sought to learn whether women possess desirable managerial traits. Others try to predict the "typical female" manager.[8] Although the principals in this study faced similar problems in changing from the elementary principalship to the high school,

[8] James R. Terborg, "Integration of Women into Management Positions: A Research Review," presented at the 84th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D. C., September, 1976, pp. 6-7.

their specific situations and their managerial style were very different. The total impression of each style was greatly revised by observation over the entire school year. Grath's early confusion and passive observation changed into a troubleshooting style as she persistently studied conflicts between her faculty and administrative team. Roberts' initial alienation of her faculty due to her take charge attitude was eventually balanced by her generous support of productive staff for whom she generated resources as rewards. Study of additional female principals over the whole school year may provide a context for interpreting the findings of normative research on larger samples of female managers.